



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
PAT QUINN

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Governor Quinn Honors Fallen Servicemembers During Memorial Day Weekend

“Portrait of a Soldier” Memorial Exhibit on Display at Illinois Tollway Oases through Independence Day

SCHILLER PARK – Governor Pat Quinn today commemorated Memorial Day by unveiling the “Portrait of a Soldier” memorial exhibit at the O’Hare Oasis and announced the summer exhibit schedule at Tollway Oases in northern Illinois. The exhibit features a series of hand-drawn portraits of nearly all of the more than 300 Illinois men and women who have died while serving our country since Sept. 11, 2001.

“The ‘Portrait of a Soldier’ memorial exhibit helps people across Illinois learn about true heroes who paid the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedoms,” Governor Quinn said. “From Memorial Day to Independence Day, I encourage everyone to take time to visit the display and honor our brave servicemembers who will forever remain in our hearts and minds.”

The exhibit is on display at the O’Hare Oasis until Sunday, June 1, and then will travel to the Hinsdale Oasis, where it will be displayed through Sunday, June 8. The exhibit will be on display at the Chicago Southland Lincoln, DeKalb, Belvidere and Lake Forest oases through the July 4 weekend.

“By displaying the portraits of these dedicated men and women, we hope to honor the sacrifice they made while serving our country,” Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur said. “We ask our Tollway customers to consider pausing in their travels to view this exhibit and help us commemorate the courage of these brave Americans.”

Governor Quinn established the “Portrait of a Soldier” memorial exhibit in 2004 to honor fallen Illinois servicemembers when artist Cameron Schilling of Mattoon drew the first portrait of Army Spc. Charles Neeley, also of Mattoon, after he was killed in Iraq. Schilling, a student at Eastern Illinois University at the time, committed to drawing a portrait of every servicemember who has fallen during the Global War on Terror.

“This powerful exhibit presented on this solemn day helps us remember the ultimate price these men and women have paid to ensure our safety,” Illinois Department of Veterans

Affairs Director Erica Borggren said. "It also reminds us of the duty we have to honor the fallen and support their families."

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Governor Quinn has made commitment to veterans, servicemembers and their families a top priority throughout his career. He led the Illinois Warrior Assistance Program that helps veterans transition back to their daily lives and the *Welcome Home Heroes* program which helps support Illinois service members seeking homeownership. As Lieutenant Governor, Governor Quinn championed the Illinois Military Family Relief Fund Act, which established a fund to provide grants to families of Illinois National Guard members and Illinois residents serving in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserve components, who are called to active duty. These grants help servicemembers and their families with the costs of food, housing, utilities and other expenses when the wage-earner has left civilian employment for active military duty. The fund has distributed more than \$15.1 million to 29,625 Illinois military families to assist with the financial burden at home.

Portrait of a Soldier Memorial Exhibit Schedule

Saturday, May 24 – Sunday, June 1	O'Hare Oasis (Schiller Park), Tri-State Tollway (I-294)
Monday, June 2 – Sunday, June 8	Hinsdale Oasis, Tri-State Tollway (I-294)
Monday, June 9 – Sunday, June 15	Chicago Southland Lincoln Oasis (South Holland) Tri-State Tollway (I-294/80)
Monday, June 16 – Sunday, June 22	DeKalb Oasis, Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88)
Monday, June 23 – Sunday, June 29	Belvidere Oasis, Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90)
Monday, June 30 – Sunday, July 6	Lake Forest Oasis, Tri-State Tollway (I-94)

NOTE: Beginning June 2, the exhibit will open at noon on Mondays at each oasis and for the rest of the week during the dates listed above, will remain open 24/7.

For more information on the "Portrait of a Soldier" exhibit or to view the portraits online, please visit www.OperationHomefront.org.

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 286 miles of interstate tollways in 12 counties in northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) and the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80). More than 1.4 million vehicles use the Tollway system every day.

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